HELLIWELL PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

February 2003

Approved by:

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HELLIWELL PROVINCIAL PARK
Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Helliwell Park is located on the east end of Hornby Island and includes a total of 2,872 hectares. A forested headland and Garry oak meadows occupy 69 hectares and the remaining 2,803 hectares cover the marine environment, encompassing Flora Islet.

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Helliwell Park is to protect rare and endangered terrestrial ecosystem elements and representative examples of marine ecosystems. The Coastal Douglas fir ecosystem is one of the most under-represented in the protected areas system and is under extreme pressures from agricultural and urban development. Thus, any protected area that contributes to the protection of this ecosystem may be considered important. In total, there are 73 small protected areas that contribute to the protection of CDF mm. In addition, this park has an outstanding collection of rare and endangered features that are provincially, nationally and internationally important.

Helliwell Park is located in the Strait of Georgia *Terrestrial* Ecosection (SOG) and the Strait of Georgia *Marine* Ecosection (SOG). Both of these are under-represented with only 5.35% and 0.94% protected respectively. Helliwell is the largest marine protected area in the SOG *Marine* Ecosection, hence it makes the largest contribution (37%) to the representation of the SOG *Marine* in the protected areas system.

Helliwell Park is also an Important Bird Area (IBA) that serves to identify and conserve a global network of bird habitat areas. It supports significant concentrations of birds that congregate in large numbers such as pelagic cormorants, surf or white winged scoters, glaucous winged gulls, oldsquaws, buffleheads, Barrows goldeneye, common goldeneye and common mergansers. These populations are considered to be important on global, continental and national scales.

In addition, it serves as important habitat for marine mammals with numerous haul-out sites for harbour seals, and with the presence of killer whales, Dall's porpoises, harbour porpoises, and sea lions at different times of the year.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is to provide day use opportunities for walking, hiking, shoreline viewing and nature appreciation in association with the upland and shoreline values of the park, and scuba diving and boating in association with the marine values. The upland portion of the park was donated by Mr. John Helliwell in 1966 for the purposes of walking and nature appreciation, and is therefore an important function of this park. There are seven kilometres of walking trails to support this function. Helliwell Park is part of a system of protected areas that the residents of and visitors to the Gulf Islands seek out for day use purposes.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of marine values	➢ Undertake research to identify and assess marine values.

Impacts of recreational diving on six gill shark	➢ Work with commercial dive operators and dive groups to ensure guidelines for diver-shark etiquette are being followed.
Commercial extraction of resources (i.e. commercial fishing) from marine area	➢ Work with DFO to enforce fishing closures to better protect marine values.
Lack of awareness of marine park boundary	➢ Develop educational information to inform recreationists and fishermen on the location of the park boundaries.
Recreation impacts on park values	➢ Develop interpretative materials to educate park visitors on park values and appropriate behaviour.
Encroachment of trees onto meadows	➢ Develop a prescribe fire plan and assess implication of fire on listed species.

Zoning

Intensive Recreation Zone – covers a small portion of park (<0.01%) dedicated to the road and parking lot. The objective of this zone is to provide a variety of readily accessible, family-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities.

Special Feature Zone – covers the cliffs which are a significant natural feature, provide roosting opportunities for pelagic cormorants and have a high quality scenic value (0.3% of the park). The objective of this zone is to protect and present significant natural or cultural values given their special character, fragility and heritage values.

Natural Environment Zone – covers the bulk of the park (99.6%) including the marine portions of the park. This zone includes many of the conservation values and the natural area that provides the backdrop for recreation. The purpose of this zone is to protect scenic values and provide recreational opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Strait of Georgia *Terrestrial* (SOG) - one of 22 small protected areas contributing to the representation of this under-represented ecosection (only 5.35%). Helliwell contributes 2.03% to the overall representation of this ecosection. Quality of representation is poor due to the small size of the park. Strait of Georgia *Marine* (SOG) – largest of 38 protected areas that contribute to the representation of this poorly-represented marine ecosection (only 0.94% total).
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	CDFmm, less than 2.5% protected provincially and smallest forest subzones in British Columbia with intensive urban and agricultural pressures. Helliwell's contribution is minimal (0.19% of overall representation of this ecosystem unit) but important given the fragmented nature of the ecosystem and the limited opportunities for protection.
Special Features	☒	Geological - sea bluffs; rich intertidal zone including cloud sponges and one of the largest herring spawns on the BC coast; globally, continentally and nationally significant concentrations of waterfowl and colonial waterbirds and seabirds; concentrations of seals and sea lions on rocky reefs
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	Nationally significant for the habitat of one of the last known populations of the endangered (COSEWIC listed) Taylor's checkerspot butterfly. Five red-listed and nine blue-listed vascular plants; six red-listed and nine blue-listed mammal, bird and invertebrate species. Red-listed Douglas-fir/Garry oak/oniongrass plant association. Six-gill shark habitat. Yellow-listed Harlequin ducks and pelagic cormorants. Threatened species (COSEWIC listed) northern abalone.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Rare and endangered species, habitat requirements. Ecology of six gill shark. Impacts of recreational SCUBA diving.

Recreation

Representation backcountry	☐	Not Applicable
destination	☒	Popular destination for visitors to the Gulf Islands; one of the best dive sites in the Gulf of Georgia

travel corridor	☒	Part of the Marine Corridor in the Strait of Georgia
local recreation	☒	Highly popular hike for local residents and visitors to the island
Special Opportunities	☒	Scuba diving, nature appreciation
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	High potential

Cultural Heritage

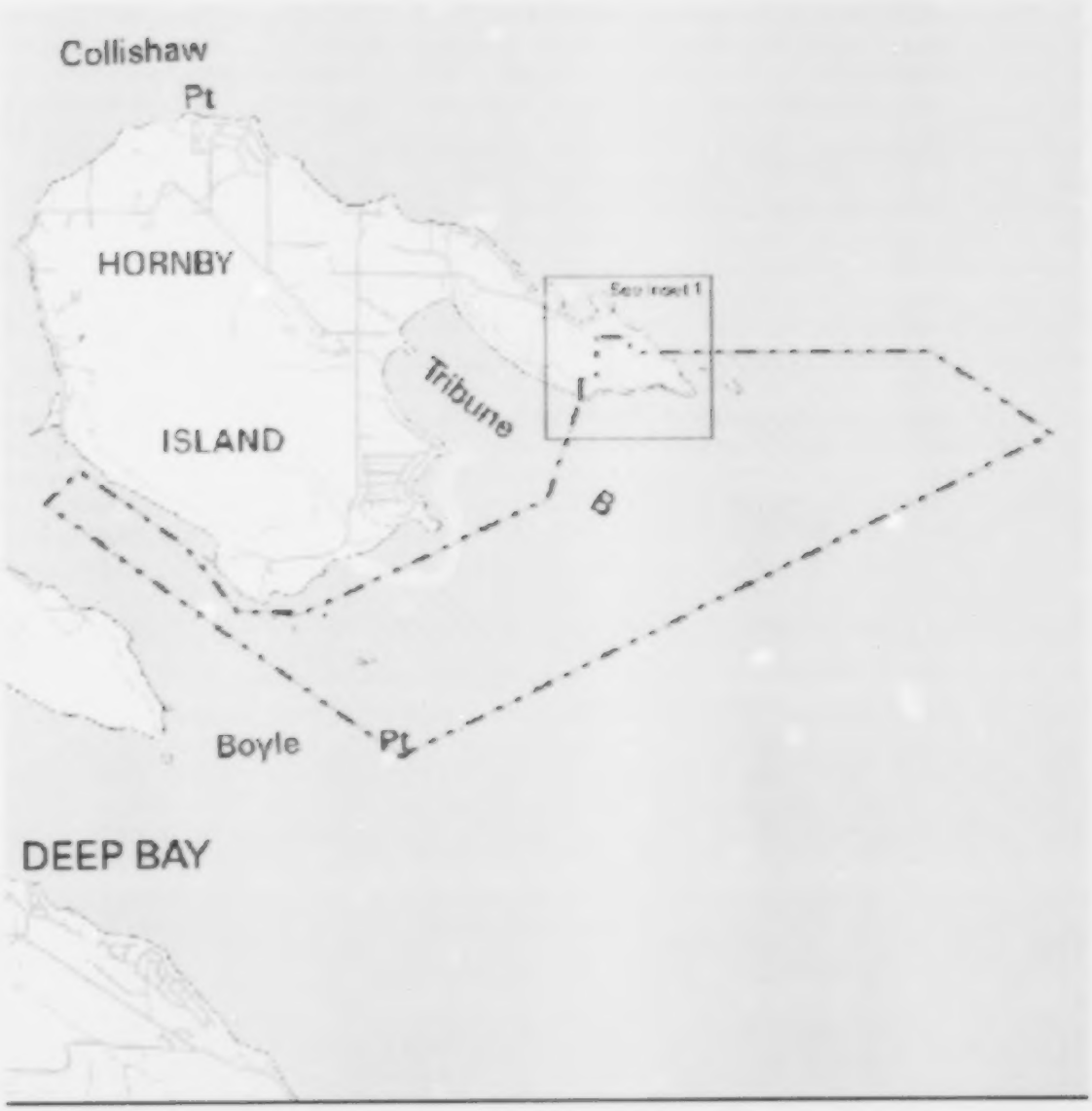
Representation	☒	Post contact settlement typical of Gulf Islands
Special Feature	☒	Middens

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☒	Important Bird Area.
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of the system of protected areas on the Gulf Islands
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☒	Fishery closures specific to this park: Commercial -- anchovy, surf perch, pile perch, sea cucumber, octopus, scallop, squid, red urchin, Pacific oyster and green urchin; Recreational -- all marine life voluntary closure.
Partnerships	☒	Helliwell Stewardship group; Parks Advisory Group; Trail Host program; marine stewardship group is being established
Vulnerability	☒	Recreational impacts on grasslands and rare and endangered species. Small size limits ability to protect CDFmm. Recreation diving may impact six gill shark behaviour.
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Pacific Heritage Marine Legacy, Marine Protected Areas Strategy

Area: 2,872 hectares (69 ha upland; 2,803 ha foreshore)

Date of establishment: September 16, 1966. A significant marine component to the park was added in 1992.



Intensive Recreation

Natural Environment

Special Restriction

Protected Area Boundary

This is a visual representation only and is not authorised for legal purposes.

Zoning Map - Helliwell Provincial Park Inset 1

Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Intensive Recreation
Natural Environment
Special Feature
Protected Area Boundary

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m

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